



California Postsecondary Education Commission

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Commission Approves New Community College Campus, Seeks Compensation Review, and Welcomes Secretary of Education Alan Bersin

SACRAMENTO — December 8, 2005 — At its meeting that concluded on December 7, 2005, the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) unanimously approved a proposal for a new community college campus in Woodland, California. The new facility will expand and build upon the existing off-campus center of the Yuba Community College. The approval came after considerable discussion about the need to provide services to rural and underserved areas in the state's geographically third largest community college district. The district's service area is 4200 square miles and encompasses 8 counties.

CPEC Executive Director Murray Haberman said that, "The Commission recognized the critical need for a new campus to serve the rapidly growing population of the Woodland area. At the same time, the district is obligated to meet the educational aspirations of its rural residents as well. This is a difficult balancing act that will require the cooperation and good will of all parties within the district."

Haberman went on to explain the issue of serving rural areas is, "Statewide in scope, affecting both four-year and two-year public colleges, and needs to be included in the process of planning as California seeks to provide educational opportunity for its diverse and growing population."

A bond initiative slated for the November 2006 election is expected to provide funding facilities at the new campus.

In other action, the Commission passed a resolution that authorized Haberman to undertake a comprehensive review of compensation for faculty and administrators in California public higher education. CPEC has historically gathered comparative information about compensation, but has been hampered in this process by a lack of information about the total compensation provided to university faculty and administrators other than salaries.

Commission Chairperson Howard Welinsky noted that, “Legitimate questions have been raised about the transparency and accountability of compensation of executives employed by University of California. The Commission understands that California operates its system of higher education in direct competition with the nation’s best universities and colleges, both public and private. We must make certain that we don’t put ourselves in a position where the world’s finest system of public higher education is no longer competitive in what has become a global marketplace for first-rate scholars and administrators.”

The Commission was also pleased to host California Education Secretary Alan Bersin for a wide-ranging discussion of the intersection of K-12 and higher education. Secretary Bersin discussed the challenge of ensuring access and opportunity for all Californians, while maintaining the progress achieved through standards based reforms. He also observed that the Commission is well positioned to provide the data necessary to establish an accountability framework for public higher education in California, and that he looked forward to a continued strong working relationship with CPEC staff and Commissioners to carry out that objective.

The California Postsecondary Education Commission advises the Governor and Legislature on higher education policy and fiscal issues. The Commission’s primary focus is to ensure that the state’s educational resources are used effectively to provide Californians with postsecondary education opportunities.

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